whether said vehicle is adequately providing said transport service.

Remarks

Applicant thanks the Examiner for participating in a cordial telephone interview with Applicant's representative on June 21, 2001, in which the rejections based upon the Leonard UK Patent Application were discussed.

In the interview, Applicant drew the Examiner's attention to the fact that the cited prior art to Leonard discloses a system in which each request for transportation is handled on an immediate basis. Specifically, as recited at page 4, "the process time between input of the requisition information and delivery of instructions to the driver may be only a matter of seconds".

In contrast, claims 47 and 91, which were rejected, recite "reviewing" a database documenting needed transportation services and then "identifying a need for immediate transportation service". Thus, these claims relate to a system in which a decision is made when a transportation service should be provided. To further clarify this point, Applicant has amended claims 47 and 91 to recite a "time frame" for transportation services that are provided, which "time frame" is

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considered in identifying a need for immediate service. No "time frame" is handled or suggested in the Leonard prior art.

The foregoing, and an amendment to claim 49 to correct its dependency, disposes of all outstanding rejections, and thus renders all claims previously pending allowable.

Applicant has also submitted new claims 132-149, which will be briefly discussed below.

Claims 132-149 describe a system and method for dispatching vehicles in which the system, without human intervention, reviews transportation services to be provided, and issues a unilateral instruction to a vehicle to provide that service such that the vehicle will then provide the service.

As noted at the interview, the Leonard prior art states at page 3 that, whatever dispatching it performs, is "of course" subject to "human intervention" in the form of the "response of the driver of the cab in obedience to the information he is given in his vehicle as a result of the command signal being received". Applicant submits, therefore, that the vehicles in the Leonard system are not under the unilateral control of the computer that distributes those instructions, but rather the instructions can be accepted or rejected by cab drivers at their pleasure.

Applicant notes that many taxi organizations, both publicly and privately dispatched, utilize drivers that are

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engaged as independent contractors who are free to accept or reject requests for service delivered to them. Within this background context, Applicant submits that the Leonard reference would be understood as facilitating a relationship of this typical form: the drivers would remain free to accept or reject requests for service. Of course, in such an environment, dispatching is not occurring without human intervention, as claimed, for the reason that human intervention is being made by the driver him or herself.

New claims 150-157 reflect subject matter in canceled claims 126 and 131, namely monitoring a vehicle's activity information to determine whether the vehicle is stalled in traffic. As claims 126 and 131 were previously deemed allowable, Applicant submits that claims 150-157 are therefore allowable.

New claims 158-165 deal with the monitoring and control of a vehicle, specifically, to obtain information on activity of the vehicle, and to control the vehicle's propulsion system (e.g., turn off the engine) in response. Applicant submits that these concepts are distinct from the prior art of record, and therefore that claims 158-165 are allowable.
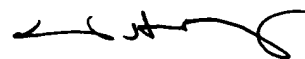
New claims 166-171 describe the process of identifying, without human intervention, conditions relating to the position or motion of a mobile asset, followed by communicating those

conditions to persons responsible for control of the asset.
While the independent claims describe this concept generally, an
example of such a process is advising a human dispatcher upon
detection of an inadequately provided transportation service that
has been previously requested, as is done where, for example, a
vehicle is late for a pickup. Applicant submits that the general
concept that this exemplifies, is distinct from the prior art and
claims 166-171 are therefore allowable.

If any petition for extension of time is necessary to
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petition for such an extension of time, and apply the appropriate
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Respectfully submitted,

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47. (Three times amended) A system for controlling a vehicle to provide transportation services, comprising:

[a database] storage documenting needed transportation services between any origin and destination and a time frame thereof, wherein said vehicle under control of said system does not travel on predetermined routes between said origin and said destination;

processing circuitry performing a dispatching process without human intervention, said dispatching process including reviewing said [database] storage, identifying a need for immediate transportation service based upon a time frame thereof, and instructing said vehicle to provide said transportation service by travelling from said origin to said destination.

49. (Amended) The system of claim [47] 48 further comprising communication circuitry forwarding instructions produced by said dispatching process from said processing circuitry to a vehicle; said communication circuitry further providing vehicle activity information relating to said vehicle to said processing circuitry for review by said monitoring process.

54. (Amended) The system of claim 49 wherein said communication circuitry respectively reads and writes communication request and response records in said [database] storage, said processing circuitry instructing a vehicle to provide services by writing a communication request in said [database] storage for later forwarding by said communication circuitry.

56. (Amended) The system of claim 55 wherein said data entry circuitry is located at a remote site in telephonic communication with said [database] storage.

59. (Amended) The system of claim 49 wherein said [database] storage, said processing circuitry and said communication circuitry are located at a plurality of locations and in telephonic communication with each other.

60. (Amended) The system of claim 47 wherein said vehicles are ambulances and said [records including] storage includes an indication of whether requested transportation services must include advanced life support facilities.

63. (Twice amended) A system for monitoring a vehicle providing transportation services, comprising:

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[a database] storage documenting needed transportation services;

processing circuitry performing a monitoring process without human intervention, said monitoring process including reviewing said needed transportation services and vehicle activity information to identify transportation services which are not being adequately provided.

73. (Amended) The system of claim 64 wherein
said communication circuitry respectively reads and writes communication request and response records in said [database] storage,

said processing circuitry instructing a vehicle to provide services by writing a communication request in said [database] storage for later forwarding by said communication circuitry, and said processing circuitry obtaining vehicle activity information by reading response records in said [database] storage.

75. (Amended) The system of claim 74 wherein said data entry circuitry is located at a remote site in telephonic communication with said [database] storage.

78. (Amended) The system of claim 64 wherein said [database] storage, said processing circuitry and said communication circuitry are located at a plurality of locations and in telephonic communication with each other.

79. (Amended) The system of claim 63 wherein said vehicles are ambulances and said [records including] storage includes an indication of whether requested transportation services must include advanced life support facilities.

80. (Amended) The system of claim 63 wherein said monitoring process creates exception records in said [database] storage identifying those records which are not being adequately serviced, and said system further comprises dispatcher circuitry for operation by a human dispatcher to use the exception records to locate records which are not being adequately serviced and take action with respect to such records.

81. (Amended) The system of claim 63 wherein said [database] storage includes records indicating billing information associated with requested transportation services, and
said monitoring process, upon determining completion of requested services [for a record], generates an invoice record in said [database] storage for billing to a customer, said invoice record including said billing information.

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86. (Amended) The system of claim 85 wherein said monitoring process determines from said vehicle activity information whether said vehicle is being used appropriately at times when said vehicle is not delivering transportation services, and if so creates an exception record in said [database] storage identifying the vehicle which is not being used appropriately.

87. (Amended) The system of claim 85 wherein said monitoring process determines from said vehicle activity information whether said vehicle is stalled in traffic, and if so creates an exception record in said [database] identifying the vehicle which is stalled in traffic.

88. (Amended) The system of claim 63 wherein said processing circuit further performs a system status management process including reviewing said [records] storage and vehicle activity information to determine and predict future needs for transportation services and comparing said future needs to expected availability of transportation services to identify future times at which available transportation services will not meet predicted needs.

89. (Amended) The system of claim 88 wherein said system status management process creates an exception record in said [database] storage identifying future times at which available transportation services will not meet predicted needs.

91. (Twice amended) A method for controlling a vehicle to provide transportation services, comprising:
documenting needed transportation services between any origin and destination and a time frame thereof, wherein said vehicle when controlled in accordance with said method does not travel on predetermined routes between said origin and said destination;
performing a dispatching process without human intervention, said dispatching process including reviewing said documented transportation services, identifying a need for immediate transportation service based upon a time frame thereof, and instructing said vehicle to provide said transportation service by travelling from said origin to said destination.

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